

Pradeep Bheemarthi
Sunnyvale, CA
March 23, 2016

History & Social Sciences Framework Review Committee,
California Department of Education,
Sacramento, CA

Subject: Removal of negative connotations being considered in CHSSP's comment 2736.

Respected Committee Members,

Thank you for making the latest draft of IQC recommendations available for public review. However I wish to share my disappointment with the way some of the proposed edits with regards to Hinduism have got accepted.

The previous version had the following line: *"The Bhakti movement placed emphasis on social and religious equality and a personal expression of devotion to God in the popular, vernacular languages."* Bhakti (devotional path) is a very important part of Hindu philosophy and is considered as one of the four paths to self realization (Yoga) and so this is very apt. Now another line has got added to it: **"The Bhakti movement also served as a critique of the power held by priestly elites."** This is a very crude and half-baked way of repeating what was already mentioned in the earlier line i.e. Bhakti placed emphasis on **social and religious equality**. It serves to provide no new information but brings strong negative connotations with it i.e. that power was held by priestly elites. Bhakti was part of many internal churnings and revivals that happened in Hinduism and it was movements such as these that brought in fresh thoughts and perspectives that helped keep Hinduism vibrant. **So either the original line be expanded to give these details, or the newly added line which is incomplete and misleading should be dropped.**

I also want to take this opportunity to request the committee against undue haste in accepting innocuous looking and possibly well intentioned edits such as these which exposes a negative or incomplete view. Since textbooks will be created based on the framework, such things may get expanded upon or magnified in the textbooks resulting in degradation of education quality for California students.

Sincerely Yours,
Pradeep Bheemarthi